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United Nations Security Council steps up global cooperation against terrorism

On 6 March a Special Meeting of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) was convened at UNHQ in New York to bring together the representatives of all international, regional and sub-regional organisations with counter-terrorism programmes. The special meeting was called following the Ministerial meeting of the Security Council on 20 January, which set objectives for global counter-terrorism activity over the coming period in a Ministerial Declaration adopted by resolution 1456.

Participants at the 6 March meeting agreed that all invited organisations had a specific role to play in enhancing the effectiveness of global action against terrorism. While each has its own mandate and its own contribution to make, all recognised the high value of co-operation at the global level. They agreed that their coordinated approach to the suppression of terrorism would be based on:

- Information: the sharing of data and best practices relevant to global co-operation;
- Complementarity: organisations to focus on what they do best while avoiding duplication of effort and waste of resources;
- Independent effort: within the overall co-ordination structure, each organisation to pursue its own mandate and initiatives with greater urgency;
- Political momentum: regional and sub-regional organisations to ensure that counter-terrorism is given a high priority by member governments within the framework of their implementation of resolution 1373.

Specific action points were provisionally agreed by participants, subject to approval by their operational headquarters:

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- all international, regional and sub-regional organisations would communicate to each other and the CTC international best practices, codes and standards relevant to the implementation of resolution 1373, and information about their activities and mechanisms in the counter-terrorism field;
- regional organisations would develop and maintain mechanisms to assist their members to meet their international obligations in the area of counter-terrorism;
- all organisations would make an effort to reduce duplication of effort and overlapping activities, in particular by and increasing cooperation and by sharing information wherever possible (with due regard to confidentiality) and by making full use of designated contact points;
- organisations would invite each other's representatives, and representatives of the CTC, to attend meetings of interest;
- they would remain aware of the interaction between their activities and human rights concerns, and of the need for respect for the rule of law and human rights obligations.

The CTC offered to take the following practical steps to assist international, regional and sub-regional organisations in combating terrorism:

- maintain, update and circulate a list of contact points in all international regional and sub-regional organisations and in member states, to establish a network of contact points responsible for the exchange of information on a global basis;
- update annually its inventory of relevant activities, mechanisms and institutions of international, regional and sub-regional organisations;
- develop its website of advice and information for all concerned;
- encourage its experts to keep in constant touch with and, as agreed by the CTC, attend relevant meetings of international, regional and sub-regional organisations;
- bear in mind international best practices, codes and standards relevant to the implementation of 1373;
- liaise with regional organisations in developing their roles on counter-terrorism consistent with their mandates and developing programmes for encouraging or assisting member states of these organisations to meet the requirements of resolution 1373;
- liaise with international organisations, including the international financial institutions, on the provision of assistance to States in the areas covered by resolution 1373.

Participants warmly welcomed this first collective opportunity to improve their understanding of each other's activities. Initiatives flowing from a deeper awareness of needs included the commitment of the African Union and World Bank to work together on intensified counter-terrorism action at the African-regional level.

They looked forward to further periodic meetings in the future, the next of which would be hosted by the Organisation of American States and would bring together regional and sub-regional organisations.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee
The United Nations
New York

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